

Message Text

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NADA/ASSESSMENT/APR 01/MFA WASHINGTON

POLITICAL ANALYSIS: ROMANIA: RESHUFFLE, REFORM, AND
REASSERTED INDEPENDENCE

1. BEGIN SUMMARY. IN THE WEEKS PRECEDING HIS APRIL 11-17
VISIT TO THE UNITED STATES, PRESIDENT CEAUSESCU ANNOUNCED

ECONOMIC REFORMS (FEBRUARY 16), UNDERTOOK A SWEEPING RE-
ARRANGEMENT OF THE PARTY AND STATE HIERARCHY (MARCH 7), AND

SECURED CENTRAL COMMITTEE APPROVAL OF THE REFORMS, ALONG WITH MORE PERSONNEL CHANGES (MARCH 22-23).

2. THE PERSONNEL SHAKEUP AFFECTED PRIMARILY THE ECONOMIC AND SECURITY HIERARCHY AND SEEMED DESIGNED TO PROVIDE A NEW LEADERSHIP FOR THE REGIME'S STRUGGLE TO MAINTAIN RAPID ECONOMIC GROWTH WHILE THE POPULATION GROWS MORE RESTIVE. IN ADDITION, CEAUSESCU HIMSELF MAY HAVE ASSUMED MORE RESPONSIBILITY WITHIN THE SECRETARIAT AT A TIME WHEN 1) INDEPENDENT ROMANIAN FOREIGN POLICY INITIATIVES ARE IRRITATING THE SOVIETS AND 2) BUCHAREST FEARS THAT MOSCOW MAY RETALIATE BY MANIPULATING ROMANIA'S HUNGARIAN MINORITY. THE PROSPECTS FOR CEAUSESCU'S NEW POLITICAL TEAM SUCCESSFULLY REFORMING THE ECONOMY AND FORESTALLING FURTHER INTERNAL RESTIVENESS ARE, HOWEVER, RATHER DIM. END SUMMARY

3. BEGIN TEXT. THE SHAKEUP:

4. THE RESTRUCTURING OF THE ROMANIAN HIERARCHY HAS OCCURRED FREQUENTLY UNDER CEAUSESCU. THIS ONE, HOWEVER, IS THE MOST SWEEPING YET; 23 PARTY AND STATE OFFICIALS WERE OUSTED OR REASSIGNED. CEAUSESCU HAS JUSTIFIED SUCH CONTINUAL SHIFTING AS NECESSARY FOR DEVELOPING THE EXPERTISE OF CONFIDENTIAL

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CADRES IN A "MULTILATERALLY DEVELOPED SOCIETY," BUT IT HAS ALSO BEEN USED TO PREVENT ANY INDIVIDUAL FROM BUILDING UP A BUREAUCRATIC POWER CENTER THAT MIGHT BE USED TO CHALLENGE CEAUSESCU'S CONTROL.

5. THE RECENT SHAKEUP INVOLVED SEVERAL MAJOR FIGURES AND CEAUSESCU CONFIDANTS. IN ACTIONS AFFECTING THE ECONOMIC LEADERSHIP, CEAUSESCU:

(A)--REMOVED HIS CLOSE ADVISERS, CORNEL BURTICA (CULTURE AND PROPAGANDA) AND ILIE VERDET (PARTY ORGANIZATION), FROM THE SECRETARIAT BUT GAVE THEM MAJOR RESPONSIBILITIES IN THE ECONOMIC AREA, WITH BURTICA TAKING OVER FOREIGN TRADE AND VERDET BECOMING FIRST DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND HEAD OF THE STATE PLANNING COMMISSION;

(B)--APPARENTLY GAVE SECRETARIAT MEMBER CONSTANTIN DASCALESCU RESPONSIBILITY FOR PARTY ORGANIZATION (REPLACING VERDET) AND OVERSIGHT OF GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION AS THE NEW HEAD OF THE COUNCIL OF SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC ORGANIZATIONS;

(C)--BROUGHT INTO THE SECRETARIAT, PRESUMABLY TO SUPERVISE AGRICULTURE, VASILE MARIN, WHO WAS ALSO APPOINTED HEAD OF THE NATIONAL UNION OF AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVES;

(D)--PROMOTED GHEORGHE OPREA TO FIRST DEPUTY PRIME MINIS-

TER, MAKING HIM THE RANKING ECONOMIC ADVISER;

(E)--RETURNED ONE-TIME CEAUSESCU RIVAL PAUL NICULESCU CLOSER TO THE CENTER OF POWER AS MINISTER OF FINANCE AND MEMBER OF THE PERMANENT BUREAU;

(F)--TRANSFERRED ION PATAN FROM THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN TRADE TO THE INCREASINGLY IMPORTANT POST OF MINISTER OF TECHNICO-MATERIAL SUPPLIES AND ALSO MADE HIM CONFIDENTIAL

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REPRESENTATIVE TO THE COUNCIL FOR MUTUAL ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE (CEMA);

(G)--REMOVED FIVE MINISTERS HANDLING ECONOMIC MATTERS--FLOREA DUMITRESCU (FINANCE), MAXIM BERGHIANU (TECHNICO-MATERIAL SUPPLIES), MIHAI MARINESCU (STATE PLANNING), ION COSMA (TOURISM), AND EMIL DRAGANESCU (DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER).

6. THE RESTRUCTURING OF THE ECONOMIC LEADERSHIP HAD A DEJA VU QUALITY: FEW NEW FIGURES EMERGED, AND SOME--BURTICA AND VERDET--REVERTED TO POSITIONS THEY HAD HELD IN THE EARLY 1970S. WHILE THE REMOVAL OF BURTICA AND VERDET FROM THE SECRETARIAT WAS SOMETHING OF A DEMOTION, THEY ARE NOW CHARGED WITH MAJOR RESPONSIBILITIES IN SHAPING THE PROPOSED ECONOMIC REFORMS. THEY WILL HAVE TO CONTEND, HOWEVER, WITH OPREA AND, TO A LESSER EXTENT, DASCALESCU AND NICULESCU, EACH OF WHOM HAS ACQUIRED KEY ECONOMIC AND/OR ORGANIZATIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES.

7. THE SECURITY AREA WAS ALSO SEVERELY AFFECTED. CEAUSESCU:

(A)--REMOVED ONE OF HIS CHIEF SECURITY ADVISERS, ION STANESCU, FROM THE POSITIONS OF PARTY SECRETARY AND DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER; AND

(B)--DISMISSED INTELLIGENCE CHIEF AND PRESIDENTIAL COUNSELOR COL. GEN. NICOLAE DOICARU AND SET UP A DEPARTMENT OF STATE SECURITY IN THE MINISTRY OF INTERIOR WHICH WILL BE SUPERVISED BY TUDOR POSTELNICU AS A MINISTER-SECRETARY OF STATE. ION SAVU WAS APPOINTED AS DEPUTY MINISTER.
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8. STANESCU, BANISHED TO A STATE SECRETARY POSITION, IS THE ONE MAJOR FIGURE WHO HAS CLEARLY LOST OUT. DOICARU HAS BEEN RELEGATED TO THE LOWLY POSITION OF MINISTER OF TOURISM, LEAVING INTERIOR MINISTER TEODOR COMAN--WHOSE

FATE IS CLEARLY UNCERTAIN--WITH TWO NEW RIVALS: SAVU AND POSTELNICU, BOTH PARTY FUNCTIONARIES WITH NO APPARENT SECURITY BACKGROUND. THE LATTER'S POSITION AS HEAD OF STATE SECURITY PUTS HIM IN A KEY POST AFTER A YEAR OF UNPRECEDENTED INTERNAL UNREST.

9. CULTURAL-IDEOLOGICAL AFFAIRS PROBABLY RECEIVED A NEW OVERSEER--VIRGIL CAZACU--WHO OVERNIGHT BECAME PARTY SECRETARY, POLITICAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER, AND DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER. ALTHOUGH MOST RECENTLY AMBASSADOR TO YUGOSLAVIA, CAZACU HAS A BACKGROUND IN ADMINISTERING THE MEDIA AND IN EDUCATION, EQUIPPING HIM TO TAKE OVER BURTICA'S OLD ROLE. HE ALSO SEEMS TO BE OCCASIONALLY INVOLVED IN INTER-PARTY MATTERS. CAZACU IS OBVIOUSLY A RISING POLITICAL STAR.

10. IN OTHER MOVES ON MARCH 23, CEAUSESCU:

(A)--REMOVED STEFAN ANDREI FROM THE POST OF PARTY SECRETARY FOR INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND APPOINTED HIM AS MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, REPLACING GEORGE MACOVESCU;

(B)--ELEVATED PARTY SECRETARY IOSIF BANC TO FULL MEMBERSHIP IN THE POLITICAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND APPOINTED HIM TO THE PERMANENT BUREAU; BANC, THUS, EMERGES AS THE RANKING HUNGARIAN MINORITY OFFICIAL;

(C)--PROMOTED VASILE MUSAT FROM DIRECTOR OF ROMANIAN RADIO AND TELEVISION TO THE SECRETARIAT. MUSAT MAY BE HANDLING SOME FOREIGN AFFAIRS MATTERS FOR CEAUSESCU.

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ANDREI'S TRANSFER LEAVES HIM IN THE PERMANENT BUREAU AND AS AN ALTERNATE MEMBER OF THE POLITICAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND BRINGS TO THE FOREIGN MINISTER'S POSITION ONE OF CEAUSESCU'S YOUNGEST AND MOST INFLUENTIAL ADVISERS. MOREOVER, ANDREI IS CLOSELY IDENTIFIED WITH SHAPING ROMANIA'S INDEPENDENT COURSE.

11. CEAUSESCU'S RESHUFFLING OF THE POLITICAL ELITE REINFORCES HIS POLITICAL PRIMACY. NOT ONLY HAS HE DEFLECTED
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